

The Farmington Times.

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NO 10

M. R. & B. T. SEEKS TO RAISE PASSENGER RATES

If Commission Will Investigate They Will Find Present Rate Too High for Services Rendered

A message from Jefferson City, under date of March 18th, conveys the information that the State Public Service Commission has fixed March 28 as the date for hearing the case of the Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railroad, the officials of this road having made claims that they could not earn interest on the money invested by operating this road under the present statutory rates. When such application was made the commission ordered a valuation of the physical property concerned, and the hearing will be on the correctness of the figures to which the company takes exception.

The Times is most heartily in favor of an equitable railroad rate, based on the quality of the service rendered to the traveling public. In fact there is, we believe, no just argument that could possibly be urged against such a position. Where service is actually rendered the traveling public we do not believe that any beneficiaries of such service would want to evade payment for same. But if the M. R. & B. T. Railroad officials have any possible reason to suggest why they should be permitted to increase the passenger rate for the service they force on their patrons, then we would be delighted to hear on what grounds such claims are based.

Before deciding this case, the Commissioners should take a ride out as far as Flat River over this road, not in a private car, but just as other passengers are forced to do—thereby acquiring a personal knowledge of the service for which this railroad company is attempting to add additional tariff. If the Commissioners will make the suggested trip, then we have no doubt that their sense of right and justice will cause them to make the right decision on this application. We believe such a journey will necessarily put them "up against" some of the inconveniences that those who must travel over that road are daily forced to endure. Then if they can honestly declare that the M. R. & B. T. railroad is giving better service

than they are getting paid for at present, we will try and suppress our indignation.

The Times editor has made a number of trips over the above suggested route during the past few months, and they have served to impress us deeply with the abundant lack of conveniences that are common on most other railroads. It is not uncommon for these trains to run many miles with the aisles crowded with passengers unable to get seats; very often women and children are forced into the smoker in order to get seats, there to be regaled with uncouth and obscene language; to be besmirched and begrimed with tobacco chewing and smoking, and compelled to undergo other hardships not at all in keeping with polite society. Few travel that route who are not filled with thanksgiving at their journey's end. To all such the very thought that this company is now seeking an opportunity to raise the passenger rate for such service, appears to be an attempted hold-up, pure and simple. It is equal to the proverbial "slow train through Arkansas," with additional hardships thrown in.

Then, their contention that under the present 2 cent rate, it is impossible to earn interest on the money invested, would appear to indicate that a change in management would be profitable to the stockholders, as we have understood that this road was the best paying property of any short railroad in the State, in passenger traffic. Under its old management, before the present 2 cent rate went into effect, the service on these trains was perhaps as good as was to be found on any railroad within the State, and then they did not charge the maximum rate permitted by law. We trust the Commissioners will make a thorough investigation of all the issues involved in this case before rendering their verdict. If this is done, we believe their opinion will be the M. R. & B. T. railroad is being over-paid, at 2 cents per mile passenger rate, for the services rendered.

Killed Fighting For the Allies

Richard J. Howard, son of Mrs. Edith P. Howard of St. Louis, was recently killed somewhere in France while fighting for the Allies, confirmation of whose death reached St. Louis this week. Young Howard and his mother, who is a friend of the Gardners here, were in Farmington some weeks during the summer of 1914, and he will be remembered by a number of our young people as a rather gay and dashing young man.

Though only about 25 years old, he has had some fast and sad experience. In 1913 he came into a patrimony of \$65,000 and started out to see the world. He went to London and there met and fell in love with a music hall girl, Dorothy Levy, whose stage name was Dorothy Dale, and married her. He spent the most of his patrimony in extravagant living and then brought her home with him. His family refused to receive her, and his resources being about exhausted, he secured apartments in a St. Louis hotel and tried to do his duty by her. He had to retrench, but this did not suit her; she wanted gaiety and excitement, and so they quarrelled and separated. He then brought suit for divorce and a decree was granted him. It was pending this suit that young Howard was a sojourner in Farmington.

He had been a Lieutenant in the First Regiment Missouri National Guards, and returning to London after his divorce the military life called to him and he volunteered his services to the Allies. He was assigned as a Lieutenant to the "Black Watch" Regiment of Scotch Infantry.

He was a scion of one of the wealthy families of St. Louis, being a grandson of the late Richard Howard of the Evans & Howard Fire Brick Company. Whatever his mistakes of

youth, which were wild and thoughtless rather than vicious, there is much sympathy and regret over his broken life and untimely though heroic death.

BASKET BALL.

Farmington broke even in their double header last Saturday night against Doe Run. The Eighth grade boys played first and won 18 to 14. The game was pretty roughly played and many fouls were called. The Farmington boys excelled in team work and passing. The boys all played their best, but the work of Farmington's two guards, Simms and Ferguson, and of "Big Schramm" at forward, was excellent.

The High School game was a good one, the final score of 48-20 against us notwithstanding. Doe Run has a good bunch of players, who play the intercollegiate game in its roughest fashion, and they won by it. Farmington did the best they knew and the first half ended in a tie score. But during the second half Doe Run clearly outplayed our boys and piled up a large score.

Farmington plays Desloge a double header next Saturday night at Farmington.

LICENSED TO MARRY

March 16, George B. Barron and Alice B. Stegman of DeSoto.

18th, John C. Ring of Leadwood and Nora Belle Newkirk of Elvins.

20th, Donald F. Porter and Ona Crawford of Elvins.

20th, T. F. Francis and Neacy Francis of Mill Creek, Madison county.

21st, Roy V. Hanchett of Grand Island, Nebr., and Alma O'Bannon of Fredericktown.

22nd, Tony Smith of Patton and Bertha Salyer of Marquand.

20th, S. G. Longgrear and Nell Stuttaers of Desloge.

"Death to Mosquitoes" Should Be Your Slogan

The season of the year is now at hand when warfare should be declared, in this city and community, against the mosquito. No quarter should be extended the enemy, but it must be a battle of annihilation of that heartless and deadly little pest, whose power for evil is gigantic if permitted to go practically unmolested, except for an occasional swat. The mosquito is a wily little criminal, an expert dodger, and can usually evade the "swat-er."

There is but one effectual way to fight the mosquito, and that is to fight him in his lair—if he is permitted to have a lair—which we are sorry to say he does have in Farmington. So long as there are cess-pools in Farmington, just so long must such incubators for mosquitoes be closely guarded against and made proof against breeding such vermin. A liberal covering of kerosene over all cess pools and other breeding places for mosquitoes in the community is the best preventive against their coming out.

The Times believes it would be wise

if the City Council would make it compulsory on all owners of cess pools to give them a liberal spraying with kerosene—and at once. Further delay in this matter will permit these disease distributors such headway that they will be practically impossible to suppress. Some of them have already taken wing, and are making themselves most unpleasantly felt. If you do not adopt means to get the mosquito now, he will most surely "get you" later. "A stitch in time" will most certainly "save nine" in this instance. Some have already given their cess pools a coating of oil, but their efforts for the public good will be in vain unless such measure is unanimously adopted. Therefore we feel that the City Council should see to it that such an order is vigorously enforced in this city. Such action may mean the saving of many lives before the coming summer is over. It will certainly mean, in a very large measure, the safeguarding of the entire citizenship.

But if such safeguarding is to accomplish its greatest good, it must be done AT ONCE.

A Brutal Attack Four Score Three

While quietly munching some food the other evening, in the quietude of our home and the domesticity of our family, we were suddenly aroused and made alert by a buzzing sound in our right ear, which for the moment filled us with fear that a death-dealing air craft was making our way, and at the same instant we felt a sharp instrument inserted into our right temple. We then realized that instant action was necessary if we were to be grabbed from impending danger. Making an upward stroke with "our good right," we landed on the affected part with a staggering force. When we regained consciousness, we seemed to have been wafted from the scene of strife, as there was in sight no indication of carnage.

But we have had it drilled into us not to act hastily, and for the next several minutes we pursued a policy of "watchful waiting." As the enemy failed to make another appearance we decided that he may have been caught between the upper and nether stone that had "put us out," and perhaps fatally wounded, or at least was frightened away by the terrific crash. But whatever the cause of his disappearance may be, it appears to us as most dastardly and bloodthirsty that we could not have been permitted to eat of the little food that had fortunately been spread before us, without being attacked in such a villainous fashion. The remainder of our family said it was a mosquito. But if it was, Mr. Mosquito must have been much overgrown, to have been able to carry a sword. We would be willing to swear that he was armed. In fact, we are not certain that we did not swear. If the mosquitoes in this vicinity are so belligerent, then the all-important thing to do is to meet them immediately with an opposing army, and let it be a battle to the death. There will be no need of shot nor shrapnel with this enemy. A liberal sprinkling of kerosene over their headquarters will prove far more effective. But such battle must be waged soon if it is to prove most effective.

MILLIONAIRES IN PROSPECT

B. H. Marbury and J. C. Watson left Monday for Miami, Okla., mineral fields to take a first-hand look at some lead and jack prospects there in which they are interested. Late reports indicate that their holdings are developing great abundance of the richest kind of mineral, all of which The Times hopes is true.

We understand several other local parties are interested in this mining venture with Messrs. Marbury and Watson, and indications appear excellent for another bunch of capitalists being developed here, which will create an increased demand for "red devils" that can "burn up the earth," as these boys enjoy "going some."

This weather is regular for March—sunshine, shadows, clouds, rain, hail snow, sleet, wind and dust may be handed out in a single twenty-four hours. We feel thankful that March is nearly gone.

Dr. Reuben Fugate attained the eighty-third anniversary of his birthday last Monday, March 20, 1916. The Doctor is the Senior Elder of the Farmington Christian Church, and the Ladies' Aid of that church conceived the happy idea of surprising him and celebrating the occasion. They got up a splendid dinner and invited all the officers of the church to meet at the Doctor's home at noon and help him enjoy it. Of course his good wife was in the conspiracy, and the Doctor, who has been on the invalid list the past winter, sitting in his rest chair in the family room, didn't imagine the preparation that was going on with the assistance of some of the good women in the kitchen and dining room a short time before the surprise was sprung. The first the Doctor knew of it was a few minutes before twelve o'clock, when the officers of the church in a body marched into the room and began to congratulate him and wish him "many happy returns." His face brightened up and a joyous smile wreathed his pleasant face.

Two of the Church Board, J. H. Tetley and J. E. Klein, were unavoidably absent, but there were present the following: the pastor, Rev. J. M. Bailey, T. D. Fisher, W. N. Fleming, Judge J. S. Clay, Dr. O. A. Smith, G. N. Baker, J. W. McCarthy, J. W. Buck, Barry Phillips, John Swink, Frank Coffman and J. J. Roberts. While congratulations and good wishes were still passing, the ladies appeared and announced that the feast board was spread. The men were conducted into the dining room and seated about the table—only men; the good ladies did the serving.

It was a spread worthy the gods, and the guests all proved themselves good feeders—their appetites paying glowing compliments to the cooks. In the midst of the feasting, one good brother lifted his eyes from his plate long enough to look around the board, and then casually observed, "there are just thirteen at the table." Did the remark throw a damper over the company? Not on your life—it was not their superstitious day, and no one volunteered to vacate to break the taboored number. The jocund word went round, the smiling faces grew brighter, the feasting slackened not, and

"Not a wave of trouble rolled Across their peaceful breasts." It was certainly an enjoyable occasion, and there was a sincere response in the heart of everyone present when, just before leaving, Rev. Mr. Bailey expressed the high esteem and love in which Dr. Fugate is held by all the church and especially the board of which he is an honored member, and prayed that he might be spared to bless them with his presence many more seasons of joy and refreshing.

Dr. Fugate has had a pretty hard winter of it, having been confined to his bed with grip and other ailments a good deal of the time, but we are glad to say is now "on the mend" and able to take a "constitutional" every day. His many friends wish him speedy recovery to his wonted self.

ANOTHER CHAPTER ON ASSESSED VALUES

Where the County Court Might Raise Revenue to Remedy Conditions Pointed Out by Grand Jury

The Grand Jury at the close of the February term of our Circuit Court turned in a report to that tribunal which was somewhat startling. It was published and naturally created comment, a lifting of the eyebrows in wonder that such things can be. It mentioned sanitary conditions at the County Jail that ought to be remedied without question; suggested needed improvements at the County Infirmary that brook no delay, and pointed out in no uncertain way the inadequacy of the Court House to meet the requirements of our rich and rapidly growing county.

These are all matters that deserve prompt attention and remedying, and if remedied in the proper way, which is always the most economical, they would cost some thousands of dollars. Our County Court has not shown itself niggardly when it comes to necessary and legitimate improvements, but like the Israelites in Egypt, they can't "make brick without straw". We are satisfied the money to do this work is not in the county revenue fund, so how would the Court go about accomplishing it? Exceed the revenue?

What a question to ask in a rich, populous county like St. Francois, that ought to have more revenue and would have more if certain rich corporation holdings were assessed at the same ratio as that of private individuals. If this were done, the tax rate for county revenue could even be lowered and then give the county an abundance of revenue and to spare for such conditions as the Grand Jury report so graphically describes. Why has this not been done? Why has it not been done long ago? Everybody who is not interested in these corporations financially or by ties of salaried preferment, recognize the justice of exacting the same ratio of taxation from them that is exacted of other taxpayers.

At the risk of again offending the rich and all but arrogant lead companies of this county we are going to repeat some facts. The St. Joseph Lead Company has land holdings in this county, the actual value of which its official statement to its stockholders places at \$6,732,542.16, and its equipment or improvements on these lands it places at \$4,064,509.33, a total actual value of \$10,807,051.49. Of this its official figures claim that \$1,723,371.84 is at Herculaneum, in Jefferson county. That leaves \$9,083,679.65 in St. Francois county. Now the assessed valuation of these lands and equipments is only \$1,452,830, or in rough figures about 20 per cent of their value—the value placed upon the lands and equipment alone by the company's own auditors—while you, Mr. Farmer, are assessed at about 40 per cent, just twice as much, on your lands and houses. There is no guess work about these figures and valuation—they are the company's own. Do you think you ought to pay twice as much tax in proportion to your wealth as this company does?

The St. Joseph Lead Company by sworn statement fixes the value of its property at Herculaneum at \$1,723,371.84. On this it paid last year only \$149 in State taxes, which indicates that it was assessed on its property in Jefferson county about \$83,000, or less than 7 per cent of its actual value. In St. Louis they claim to be paying taxes on an assessment of about 90 per cent. No wonder the taxpayers of that city are complaining about paying a disproportionate share of State taxes. If this St. Joseph Lead

Company property were in St. Louis instead of Herculaneum, the State tax on it would be in the neighborhood of \$1,800 instead of \$149.

Let us take up the Doe Run Lead Company. It owns, according to its estimated official figures, \$11,771,802.91 in lands in St. Francois county, and \$2,737,480.42 in equipment or improvement—a total of \$14,509,283.33. It is assessed for taxing purposes at \$1,004,825, or less than 9 per cent of the value which the company places upon it, while you, Mr. Farmer, are assessed at 40 per cent on your farm land and improvements. Do you see any reason why you should be paying four times as much tax on your wealth as the Doe Run Lead Company does?

You will notice that while the Doe Run Lead Company owns \$14,509,283.33 in lands and equipment, and the St. Joseph Company owns considerably less in lands and equipment than the Doe Run, in exact figures in this county, \$9,083,679.65, the St. Joseph is assessed at \$448,005 more than the Doe Run. This may be because the St. Joseph owns other assets which, with its lands and equipment, amounted at the close of the calendar year December 31, 1914, to \$22,776,728.53, while the Doe Run's assets over and above its lands and equipment were only \$775,517.16. But if these extra assets were included in the assessed valuation of the St. Joseph, then that company was assessed at only about 9 per cent of the value which it places upon its capital wealth, about the same as that of the Doe Run, and only one-fourth as much as you are assessed, Mr. Farmer.

Whether there is any disparity in the assessment of the Federal and the National Lead Companies, we cannot say as we haven't any balance sheets or statements of theirs to their stockholders showing the value of their holdings, and can therefore make no comparisons, much as we would like to do so. We want to deal with actual values now and not guess work.

But the question of taxation does not end here. Bonne Terre and Flat River are both prosperous towns, with large populations, doing a driving, thriving business. The lands on which these two most populous towns of the county are built belong to the lead companies. The surface lots of these towns are leased to the people for residences and business houses, and not a few handsome residences and commodious business blocks have been erected on them. If a man in Farmington owns a lot and erects a \$5,000 residence or a \$10,000 business block on it, he is assessed and pays taxes on 40 per cent of its value. Does the man who builds on the companies' leased lots in Flat River and Bonne Terre have to pay taxes on it? He does not. It is on the company's leased land, and that land is included in the company's assessed valuation. The Assessor can't assess any of the buildings separate from the lots on which they stand, so a man may own a \$10,000 business block on one of these leased lots and not pay a cent tax on it. Thus, while the company is assessed at 9 to 20 per cent on its wealth, you, Mr. Farmer, are assessed at 40 per cent, and the company stands as a shield between the people who build on its leased lots and the Assessor. Otherwise they would be paying taxes on their residences and store houses, the same as farmers and people living in other towns pay on their houses, and thus help the latter to bear the cost of our State and county governments.

Another Nice Batch

The following names have been added to The Times subscription list the past week, all of whom have voluntarily come in or sent their names, owing to the information that has reached them that this is now actually a NEWSPAPER, worthy of their support: Oscar L. Haile and B. L. Morris of Farmington, R. J. Clay of Leadwood, W. P. Billington of Poplar

Bluff, Hon. Edw. Robb of Perryville, N. C. Beard of Mine La Motte, Jesse E. Keay of Elvins, J. H. Tullock of Bismarck, John Unger of Morristown.

The following have renewed their subscriptions: David Barton, F. A. Gillespie, and Mrs. S. J. Elgin of Farmington; T. J. Merryman and Francis Haynes of Doe Run, C. I. Garrett of Bismarck, C. J. Kocher of Ponca, W. J. Hobbs of Bonne Terre, Marion Jarrells of Esther, Chas. Keith of Knob Lick, Miss Cynthia Gruner of Doe Run.